

FROM SIENA TO ROME

vineyard of the soul. " O dearest father, consider your position and look at your vineyard. In the secret of your heart, you hold that Pope Urban VI is the true Sovereign Pontiff; and whoso says otherwise is a heretic, rejected by God, no faithful Catholic, but a renegade Christian who denies his faith. We are bound to hold that he is the Pope, canonically elected, the vicar of Christ on earth, and we are bound to obey him even unto death. Even if he were so cruel a father as to hunt us with reproaches and with every torment from one end of the world to the other, we are still bound not to forget nor to persecute this truth. And if you said to me : ' On the contrary, I have been informed that Pope Urban VI is not in truth the Sovereign Pontiff' ; I should answer that I know that God has given you so much light that, if you do not deprive yourself of it by the darkness of anger and resentment, you will know that whoso says this lies upon his own head. They make themselves liars, by retracting the truth that they delivered to us, and represent it as a lie. I know well that you know what has moved those who were set in the place of truth that they might spread the faith. Now they have contaminated the faith and denied the truth ; they have raised such a schism in Holy Church that they are worthy of a thousand deaths. You will find that nought else has moved them save that passion which has moved you yourself, to wit, self-love which could not endure a harsh word or rebuke, nor to be deprived of territory, but conceived resentment and brought forth anger as child. By this they, and all who act against this truth, are depriving themselves of the goods of heaven. The evidence that can be seen of this truth is so plain and so clear and so manifest, that even the most unlearned person can see and understand it."¹

Two of those for whose spiritual welfare she had been specially solicitous and upon whom she had based great hopes as possible champions of Christ and the Church—Duke Louis of Anjou and Queen Giovanna of Naples—were among the first to reject this truth, which to Catherine seemed so clear and manifest. ¹ Letter 313 (192), revised by the Harleian MS. 283